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# Public Health Reports

Treasury Department, United States Marine-Hospital Service. Published in accordance with act of Congress approved February 15, 1893.

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## UNITED STATES.

*Circular letter relating to post-epidemic disinfection and aeration.*

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
OFFICE OF SUPERVISING SURGEON-GENERAL,  
U. S. MARINE-HOSPITAL SERVICE,  
*Washington, D. C., December 1, 1897.*

*To commissioned officers of the Marine-Hospital Service,  
acting assistant surgeons, and State and municipal health officers:*

Referring to circular letter issued by this Bureau October 11, 1897, in which attention was called to the importance of keeping a record of the name of each person contracting yellow fever and the street and number of each house where yellow fever occurred, I have to state that inasmuch as the fever has disappeared in the South, it is now deemed necessary to begin the work of post-epidemic disinfection. In order that the same may be uniform and thorough in its character the following plan is recommended:

### HOUSE TO HOUSE INSPECTION.

(a) The medical officer in command shall make, or cause to be made, house to house inspection of all infected localities and obtain complete lists (giving number and street when practicable) of all buildings, whether private dwellings, public houses, or hospitals in which yellow fever occurred or where suspicious disease existed during the past summer and fall, the city or town to be divided into districts.

(b) This inspection should be made by competent sanitary officers, under direction of the medical officer in command, and every part of the premises must be carefully inspected, including the rooms, basements, cellars, passages, closets, and garrets; the sinks, drains, cess-

pools, latrines, privies, or water-closets; the stables, sheds, outhouses, pens, etc.

(*c*) The inspection is not only for the purposes of disinfection, but also is intended to place each house and its surroundings in a perfectly sanitary condition, and includes the inspection of all streets, alleys, and byways.

(*d*) The inspection should include an examination into the water supply, and particularly as to the proximity of wells, cisterns, and springs to the privies, stables, pens, and other suspicious surroundings.

#### LIST OF YELLOW FEVER SUFFERERS AND SUSPECTS.

A complete list of all persons exposed to, or who may have contracted the disease, with the result in each case.

(*a*) If death resulted, where buried and under what precautions.

(*b*) If recovered or removed to another domicile in the same city, town, or place (or if departed from the neighborhood), ascertain all facts and make note of the same in order that it may be determined what action shall be taken in each case.

#### GENERAL DISINFECTION.

(*a*) It is recommended that after the inspection above provided for has been made, the medical officer shall designate a competent sanitary officer to perform the thorough disinfection and cleansing of all houses and premises which he may have decided require the same, said disinfection to begin as soon as practicable after the inspection referred to has been made in any locality.

(*b*) It is recommended that the removal of all refuse, garbage, and other deleterious matter be included in the work of disinfection, and that all articles of little value, such as old rags and other accumulations of worthless material, be destroyed, whether found in dwellings or "slop-shops."

(*c*) It is recommended that the inspectors inform all parties whose houses are visited, that no injury to their houses or contents will result from the disinfection contemplated, that even the most delicate fabrics can now be rendered free from contagion by a harmless process of disinfection, and that it is absolutely necessary for the protection of themselves and the community in which they live.

#### DISINFECTION OF HOUSES.

(*a*) The use of formaldehyd generators, or lamps, is recommended for the disinfection of houses and their contents. The details of their management for generating and applying formaldehyd gas should be fully understood by the sanitary officers in charge of the work.

(*b*) All the contents of the houses, including wearing apparel of every description, should be spread about the rooms; bedding or mat-

tresses not used by the sick should be placed upon the chairs or tables, or, better still, hung up in the yards and beaten; soiled bedding and mattresses used by the sick should be steamed or destroyed; trunks, closets, and bureau drawers, and all closed receptacles, should be opened and their contents exposed.

#### AERATION.

Both before and after disinfection the houses should be opened and thoroughly aired—"chilled," if the weather is favorable—and, later on, all the rooms, closets, etc., should be exposed to several hours of airing during freezing weather, and repeated at intervals during the winter.

#### DISINFECTION OF STABLES, PENS, ETC.

The use of bichloride of mercury solution, 1-500, or carbolic acid solution, 50 parts to 1,000 parts (applied by means of a spray), is deemed sufficient if all exposed surfaces are completely saturated. Privies may be disinfected by chloride of lime or strong solution of carbolic acid.

WALTER WYMAN,  
*Supervising Surgeon-General.*

[Reports to the Supervising Surgeon-General United States Marine-Hospital Service.]

*Yellow fever in the United States as reported to the Supervising Surgeon-General United States Marine-Hospital Service to December 1, 1897. (a)*

States.	Cities.	Date.	Cases.	Deaths.
Alabama .....	Alco.....	Oct. 8.....	1	0
	Bayminette.....	Oct. 14.....	1	1
	Flomaton.....	To Nov. 24.....	68	0
	Greensboro.....	Nov. 2.....	1	1
	Mobile.....	Sept. 13-Sept. 30...	74	11
		Oct. 1-Oct. 31...	<sup>b</sup> 187	25
		Nov. 1-Nov. 24...	100	12
		Nov. 25.....	1	0
		Nov. 27.....	1	0
	Montgomery.....	Oct. 18-Oct. 27...	104	8
		Nov. 1-Nov. 10...	16	3
	Notasulga.....	Oct. 25.....	1	0
	Sandy Ridge.....	.....do.....	1	0
	Selma.....	Oct. 23-Oct. 31...	11	1
		Nov. 3.....	0	1
		Nov. 10.....	1	0
	Wagar.....	To Nov. 3.....	45	3
	Whistler.....	Oct. 29-Nov. 12...	122	7
Florida.....	Port Barrancas.....	Nov. 18.....	1	1
		Nov. 21.....	1	0
		Nov. 22.....	2	0
	Pensacola.....	Nov. 15.....	1	1
Georgia.....	Atlanta.....	Oct. 8-Oct. 27...	<sup>c</sup> 3	0
Illinois.....	Calro.....	Sept. 19-Sept. 20...	4	0
Kentucky.....	Louisville.....	Sept. 23.....	1	1
Louisiana.....	Baton Rouge.....	Oct. 18-Oct. 31...	4	2
		Nov. 11.....	1	0
	Franklin.....	Oct. 14-Oct. 21...	3	1
	New Orleans.....	Sept. 8-Sept. 30...	226	27
		Oct. 1-Oct. 31...	1,285	149
		Nov. 1-Nov. 24...	371	99
		Nov. 25.....	4	2
		Nov. 26.....	2	3
		Nov. 27.....	4	2
		Nov. 28.....	1	1
		Nov. 29.....	0	0
	Patterson.....	Oct. 21.....	1	0

<sup>a</sup> For daily reports of cases and deaths, see previous PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS.

<sup>b</sup> Two in vicinity.

<sup>c</sup> Refugees.